

Kafirs (whom I include in the term "Dards") is very good. My informants were two Kafir ladies, who lived for some weeks in my compound and whose religious customs had, no doubt, been affected on their way down through Kashmir. That they go once a year to the top of a mountain as a religious exercise and put a stone on to a cairn; that the number of Mohammedan heads hung up in front of their doors indicates their position in the tribe; that they are said to sit on benches rather than squat on the ground like other Asiatics; that they are reported to like all those who wear a curl in front; that they are fair and have blue eyes; that they drink a portion of the blood of a killed enemy—this and the few words which have been collected of their language is very nearly all we have hitherto known about them. What I have been able to ascertain regarding them, will be mentioned elsewhere.*

II. FORMS OF GOVERNMENT AMONG THE DARDS.

Chilas, which sends a tribute every year to Kashmir for 643 •
the sake of larger return-presents rather than as a sign of subjection, is said to be governed by a council of elders, in which even women are admitted.† When I visited Gilgit, in 1866, it was practically without a ruler, the invading troops of Kashmir barely holding their own within a few yards of the Gilgit Fort—a remarkable construction which, according to the report of newspapers, was blown up by accident in 1876, and of which the only record is the drawing published in the *Illustrated London News* of the 12th February 1870.‡ There is now (1877) a Thanadar of Gilgit, whose rule is probably not very different from that of his rapacious colleagues in Kashmir. The Gilgitis 648
are kept quiet by the presence of the Kashmir army, and

* Since writing the above in 1867, a third Kafir from Katir has entered my service, and I have derived some detailed information from him and others regarding the language and customs of this mysterious race, which will be embodied in my next volume. [This note was written in 1872.]

† I have heard this denied by a man from Sachi, but state it on the authority of two Chilas who were formerly in my service.

‡ My Sachi says that only a portion of the Fort was blown up.

648 by the fact that their chiefs are prisoners in Srinagar, where other representatives of our reigning houses are also under

649 surveillance. Mansur Ali Khan, the supposed rightful Raja of Gilgit is there; he is the son of Angbar Ali Khan, son of Raja Khan, son of Gurmukh Khan—but legitimate descent has little weight in countries that are constantly disturbed by violence, except in Hunza, where

[22] the supreme right to rule is hereditary.* The Gilgits, who are a little more united than their neighbours to the West, North and South, and who possess the most refined Dardic dialect and traditions, were constantly exposed to marauding parties, and he late ruler of Yasin, Goudar-Amin, who had conquered Gilgit, made it a practice to sell them into slavery on the pretext that they were *Shikhs* and infidels. Yasin was lately ruled by Mir Wali, the supposed murderer of Mr. Hayward, and is a dependency of Chitral, a country which is ruled by Amin-ul-mulk.

000 The Hunza people are under Ghazan Khan, the son of Ghazanfar,† and seem to delight in plundering their English neighbours, although all travellers through that inhospitable region, with the exception of Badakshan merchants, are impartially attacked by these robbers, whose depredations have caused the nearest pass from Central Asia to India to be almost entirely deserted (1866). At Gilgit I saw the young Raja of Nagyr, with a *servant*, also a Nagyri. He was a most amiable and intelligent lad, whose articulation was very much more refined than that of his companion, who prefixed a guttural to every Khajund word beginning with a vowel. The boy was kept a prisoner in the Gilgit Fort as a hostage to Kashmir for his father's good behaviour,

* *See "History of Dardistan" for details of the contending dynasties of that region, pages 67 to 110.*

† Major Montgomery remarks "the coins have the word *Gajandar* on them, the name, I suppose, of some emblematic animal. I was however unable to find out its meaning." The word is *Gajandar*, Ghazanfar [which means in *Arabic*: lion, hero] and is the name of the former ruler of Hunza whose name is on the coins. In Hunza itself, coined money is unknown. [For changes since 1866, see "Hunza and Nagyr Handbook, 1893."]

3: Muhammad
782, 787, 643 ●

AV3 Dard AV3

/For allusions to above categories in mythology and folklore, see category
539. --Analyst/

- 162 the soil, and not to the ruler or the ruling class, who threaten
 197 in time to efface the original inhabitants. By them the local
 103 name of Boorishé has been converted into Woorshik, from
 which also the valley takes its name. I am unable to say to
 what language the term *goom* belongs, but it evidently means
 either "valley" or "country," as there are several instances of
 its application to signify the place inhabited by certain peo-
 101 ple, as Kalashgoom, the country of the Kalash. In Hunza,
 Nager, and Gilgit, Yassin is sometimes called Azair, which
 may be the ancient name of the valley, but is more-likely a
 corruption of the name Ghizr, a district of some importance fur-
 ther to the westward. The people of both Yassin and Chitral
 are also sometimes styled by their eastern neighbours Poré,
 161 and their country Poriaki, from *deer*, "the west." The fixed
 population of Woorshigoom is, owing to oppression and mis-
 government, very small, probably not exceeding 3,000 souls.
 134 The soil is particularly rich and fertile, though the climate will
 not permit of its yielding more than one crop in the year. The
 173 ruling family are styled Khushwakté, from an ancestor named
 Khushwakt, and the title assumed is the Persian one of
 "Mihter." Reminiscences of the more ancient rulers exist in
 the names of certain spots, such as *Thum rai*, "the Thum's
 643 seat." The present Mihter, Gholam Mohi-oodeen, is better
 known by his nickname of Peihlowan Bahadoor. He is a young
 man of twenty-nine years of age, and of manly and energetic
 character, inherited from his father, Gohr Aman, whose cruelties
 in Gilgit have been related by Mr. Drew, but who with all his
 cruelty of disposition was undoubtedly an able and energetic
 soldier. Peihlowan Bahadoor succeeded his brother Meer
 Wulli, when the latter was forced to fly from the country
 after the murder of Mr. Hayward. The princes of the Khush-
 wakté family rule over a considerable part of Upper Chitral as
 well as Yassin, but generally prefer the latter as their place
 of residence.
- 487 From Yassin two roads lead to the Chitral Valley. By
 the Toowi Pass, Mastooch can be reached in five days: this
 route, however, can only be used in summer, when it is the one
 most frequented, as by it the numerous river-crossings, which
 constitute the chief difficulty to be encountered, are avoided.
 The pass is a high one, probably not less than 16,000 feet,
 and a difficult piece of glacier has to be traversed. The
 second and easier, though longer, route is by Ghizr and Las-
 poor.

This road runs from the mouth of the Woorshigoom Valley

increases in density. Forty miles below Chitral a route leads from the main valley past Ashuret over the Lowri Pass to the Afghan state of Dir. Twenty miles lower down, at Birkot, is the mouth of the valley inhabited by the Siah Posh of the Bushgali tribe, the upper end of which is entered from the Dorah Pass. Several smaller valleys are inhabited by Siah Posh, who have lost their independence, and at Bailam the southernmost Kashkar village is passed, and the Afghan state, of Asmar is reached. The boundary between Kashkar and Asmar is marked by a wall built across the valley on the right bank between Bailam and Nawakali, and on the left bank by the small stream below Saoo. The valley for many miles above the boundary is reputed to be extraordinarily fertile.

Chitral, which is the seat of the ruler of Kashkar, comprises six large villages, which extend for 3 miles along both sides of the river at an elevation of about 4,000 feet. Its name has gradually come to be applied to the whole country. On the right bank is the fort in which the Mihter, or Badshah, —for he is known by both titles,—resides. Half a mile above the fort is an excellent wooden bridge protected by a stone tower at each end. All the forts in Kashkar differ in construction from those inhabited by the Shin and Boorish races, having inordinately high towers rising 18 feet above the ramparts, which are themselves 30 feet high. Their distribution also gives evidence of a more secure state of society. Instead of every village having one, and sometimes two, forts sufficient to hold all the inhabitants, as is the case in the valleys draining directly into the Indus, the only forts in Kashkar are the abodes of rulers of districts, or persons nearly related to the ruler.

The ruling family are styled Katooré, from Shah Katoor, brother of Shah Khushwakt, the ancestor of the reigning family of Yassin; but the name Kator seems to have been applied to the country in former times, before the existence of the present dynasty of rulers. The present Mihter, Aman-ool-Mulk, is about 58 years of age, and notorious for his astute and deceitful character. The number of the population he rules over can only be roughly computed, and probably amounts to less than 200,000 souls. These numbers would appear scanty for so large an extent of country, but the population is wholly agricultural, and, as in all these very mountainous countries, the habitations are, with few exceptions, confined to a narrow strip along the sides of streams.

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564 Zundré and Ashimadek, but do not give daughters in return, except to the Zundré, who, being descended from a former dynasty of rulers of the country, are regarded as of royal blood. All the rest, including the Zundré, intermarry without restriction, but never with the Fakir Mushkin class, from whom, however, they take daughters as concubines.

651 The regular revenue of the country is paid solely by the "Fakir Mushkin" class. Those who live by agriculture are assessed at a tenth of all produce, one sheep, one blanket, and 20 lbs. of honey from each house yearly. The pastoral community is assessed at four sheep, three woollen robes, and 30 lbs. of butter from each house yearly. A few villages, which are almost entirely employed in mining, pay 16 lbs. of mine produce yearly for each house. There is, however, very little regularity observed in collecting these imposts, and, in practice, as much is wrung from the subject population as possible. Considerable dues are collected from the merchants who trade between Badakhshan and the Punjab, and the Chitral ruler's revenue is further increased by the sale of hawks and falcons, of which great numbers are captured every year and sold to merchants, who take them to the Punjab.

643 The administration of justice is practically the will of the ruler, though nominally the precepts of the Sharyat are observed. In some cases the intervention of the Moollahs is useful. In one case which came to my knowledge they [67] intervened to save the life of a condemned man who had murdered a favourite follower of the Mihter, by pointing out that the Mihter's injustice in permitting his favourite to forcibly abduct the man's wife had led to the murder. Small cases are settled by the district Ataliks.

642 A somewhat elaborate administrative machinery exists which was probably instituted by, or borrowed from, the Shin Ras of Gilgit. The names of many of the officials are the same, though their functions differ, and the presence of extra officials with Usbek titles shows that a new system has been grafted on the old one.

634 The country is divided into eight districts. At the head of each is an Atalik, whose duty it is to collect the revenue of his district and to command the men of it in war. Like 651 the Wuzeers of districts in Gilgit, he has the right of releasing one man in each village from military service. Out of the revenue of his district he receives 12 sheep, 12 measures of butter, 20 measures of wheat, and a proportion of the

right side of the snowy Pass, and is always ready to advance to Gilgit if required.

I know very little of the history of Astor. Bernier, who wrote about the year 1660, in enumerating the countries that border Kashmir, speaks of the territories of *Raja Gamon*. Now from geographical position I infer that this was the ruler of Astor. When the Sikhs held Kashmir, the Astor Raja was tributary to them; he had become so without any force having been sent; for a time he remained in quiet. But a curious thing happened. When Wazir Lakpat (who was lieutenant of Zurāwar Singh, who was servant of Raja Gulāb Singh, who was a tributary of the Sikhs) was victorious in Skārdā, he came over the Harpo Lā and invaded Astor. Lakpat besieged the Astor fort for four months; at the end of which time it was given up for want of provisions, and the Raja was taken away prisoner to Skārdā; and this though he was on terms of friendship and (in a degree) dependent on the Sikh Governor of Kashmir. At last, representations on the subject went to Lāhor, and from there Gulāb Singh received directions to desist from interfering with Astor, so the Raja was sent back. But not long afterwards the Sikhs themselves from Kashmir required a passage through the Astor territory on their way to Gilgit (as will be related in Chapter XIX.), and not only so, but they required to make their communications sure; with this object a Sikh post was placed at Astor, and from that time the independence of the Raja diminished; now there is a titular Raja, for whose subsistence some provision is made, whether by pension or from land I do not know.

At Astor and for many miles on there is one general character of the valley; at the bottom it is very narrow; the river is quite confined between the ends of great spurs from the lofty mountain-ridges on both sides; the cultivation is on very small spaces, usually some hundreds of feet above the valley-bottom. The hill-sides are partly broken into cliffs and partly of a smooth surface, grown over with grass in tufts, and with bushes of pencil-cedar scattered over, while in parts sheltered from the sun *Pinus*

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131 A few miles below Koli is Batera; beyond that Dārdistān
101 ends and the Pathān country, where the Pashtū language pre-
vails, begins. The Koli people are Dārds; they know both the
Dārd and Pashtū languages.

642 Many places have been put down as republics; what I have
646 been able to find out about the way of their government will
apply to them generally. There is a general assembly of the
people, called Sigās, which decides on almost every matter.
[562] It is called together by beat of drum; men, old and young,
attend it, but not women; none who have the right to attend
are allowed to be absent, under pain of fine. In this assembly
the rights of a minority are carefully guarded. I have been told
that if even one man, supposing him to be of any consideration,
object to a policy, it cannot be carried out; the assembly is ad-
journed for a few days, and in the interval effort is made either
to convince the objector or to modify the proposal; then meeting,
they may perhaps have again to adjourn; but in time something
or other is sure to be arranged.

643 The executive consists of a few men, may be five or six, chosen
by the people in their assembly. These are called *Joshtero* in the
Dārd language. They are chosen for their wisdom; but here as
elsewhere wealth seems to have influence to convince the people
of the wisdom of those who possess it. The office of *Joshtero* is
not hereditary; the *Joshteros* must be in general accord with the
assembly else they will be displaced. The *Joshteros* deliberate
together on a policy, but cannot carry it out without the consent
of the assembly of the people, which they themselves call
[692] together. The *Joshteros* are also arbitrators to settle disputes of
water and wood, and what not.

623 Where the valley is large, like, for instance, Dārel, each village
has its own Sigās, or assembly, which settles the particular affairs
of that village, while for matters of more general policy the *Josh-*
teros of all the villages first meet, and make among themselves
a plan to propose, and then a general parliament is called; that
is, the people themselves of all the villages together meet to hear
and decide. If all of the villages cannot agree on one policy, then

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described in the article on KASHMIR. By that route Gilgit lies at a distance of 390 miles from the present railway base at Rāwalpindi. An alternative line has been opened over the Babusar pass, which brings Gilgit within 250 miles of the railway at Hassan Abdāl. This line, besides being shorter, has the advantage of crossing only one snow pass, instead of two, or practically three, if the winter snow at Murree be taken into consideration. The routes to the north are mere tracks, when the military roads connecting Gilgit with the outposts at Gupis and Hunza have been passed.

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648 Post and
telegraph
offices.

There is a daily postal service with India by the Burzil pass and Kashmir, and the telegraph line follows the same route. Both services work well in spite of heavy snow and destructive avalanches, and are maintained by the Government of India. There is a weekly postal service from Gilgit to Chilās and Gupis, and a fortnightly post between Gilgit and Kashgar via the Kilik pass in the summer, and the Mintaka in the winter.

643 Adminis-
724 tration,
[643] &c.

The Gilgit Wazārat is in charge of a Wazir Wazārat. Crime is slight; there is no jail and no police organization. Police duties are carried out by the levies and a few soldiers of the Kashmir regular troops. There is little litigation; and the chief business of the Wazir is the provision of supplies to the garrison at Gilgit, now effected by an excellent system of transport from Kashmir. In 1891-2, at the time of the Hunza-Nagar expedition, the garrison had a force of 2,451; in 1895, when the Chitrāl disturbances broke out, it consisted of 3,373; and the present garrison numbers 1,887, including a mountain battery, two infantry Imperial Service regiments, and Kashmir sappers and miners. A school is maintained at Gilgit.

651 Land
revenue.

A land revenue settlement of Astor and Gilgit has been made. It was found impossible to introduce a purely cash assessment, owing to the State's requirements in grain; but many inequalities and abuses were removed, and, on the whole, the condition of the villagers is satisfactory.

631 Political
643 relations.

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A British Political Agent resides at Gilgit. He exercises some degree of supervision over the Wazir of the Kashmir State, and is directly responsible to the Government of India for the administration of the outlying districts or petty States of Hunza-Nagar, Ashkuman, Yāsīn, and Ghizar, the little republic of Chilās, and also for relations with Tangir and Darel, over which valleys the Puniāl Rās and the Mehtarjaos of Yāsīn have partially acknowledged claims. These States acknowledge the suzerainty of Kashmir, but form no part of its territory. They pay an annual tribute to the Darbār-

SHINĀKI

III

Hunza and Nagar in gold, Chilās in cash (Rs. 2,628), Ashkuman, Yāsin, and Ghizar in grain, goats, and g/h. The relations of the Political Agent with the outlying States are eminently satisfactory. No undue interference takes place in the administration, and the people are encouraged to maintain their customs and traditions intact. Besides the military garrison, furnished by the Kashmir State, there is a small but extremely efficient force of local levies armed with Snider carbines. They are drawn from Hunza, Nagar, Puniāl, Sai, and Chilās.

Shināki.—A group of small republics in the valley of the Indus, lying west of Kashmir and south of Gilgit. The territory extends from the junction of the Astor river with the Indus to Seo on the right bank and Jalkot on the left bank of the latter river. Within this area the people are grouped in communities inhabiting one or more nullahs, each community forming a separate republic. Starting from the junction at Rāmghāt these are, in order: on the right bank, Gor, Kinergah, and Hodar; and on the left bank, Bunar, Thak, Butogah, Giche, and Thor. They constitute the area known as the Chilās subdivision of the Gilgit Agency, while Chilās proper includes Kinergah, Butogah, and Giche. Lower down the river are Darel, Tangir, Khilli, and Seo on the right bank, and Harban, Sazin, and Jalkot on the left bank.

After the conquest of Chilās by Kashmir in 1851, the Mahārājā imposed a tribute in gold-dust, and arranged for the administration of the country as part of the Gilgit district. A British Agency was re-established at Gilgit in 1889, which included, among other territory, the Chilās subdivision described above except Thor. In 1892 a British mission to Gor was attacked by the Chilāsīs, which led to the occupation of their country and the appointment of a Political officer at Chilās. The right of the Kashmir Darbār to construct roads and station a limited number of troops in the territory was secured, but the autonomy of the Chilāsīs was guaranteed. Under the revised arrangements made in 1897 the republics pay small fixed sums to the Mahārājā, and in 1899 Thor was incorporated in Chilās. Darel has rendered a tribute of gold-dust to Kashmir since 1866, when the Mahārājā's troops raided the country. The tribute is now paid through the Puniāl governor. Tangir pays a small tribute to the governor of Yāsin. The remaining communities have no political relations with either Kashmir or British India, except Jalkot, which from its position dominates Thor and the head of the Kāgān valley in the North-West Frontier Province.

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ASTOR AND ITS RAJA

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country, and close under whose shadow we were marching,—magnificent views, giving an overpowering impression of towering height. Locally it¹ is called Deomir, "the mountain of the gods," a fitting name. 133 [103]

The last few marches showed miles of terraced land out of cultivation, the result of the incursions of the murderous Chilas who raided from the Indus valley. In a country where every foot of cultivation has to be won with heavy toil from nature, nothing appeals so to your heart as the sight of deserted land and ruined homesteads. 311

Finally, after thirteen days' marching, we reached Astor, which used to be the capital of a kingdom important enough in a small way in the Hindu-Kush. The Sikhs absorbed it, all that remains of its former glories being a fort now held by the Dogras. 361 439

Astor boasts of a bazaar, the first met with since leaving Kashmir; beyond it there are only two, at Gilgit and Chitral. Most of the trade was at this time done by itinerant traders from Koli and Palas in the Indus valley, who brought goods from India, taking back gold-dust and products of Central Asia, and who penetrated into the remotest glens. The more peaceful state of things which we introduced has given a start to Gilgit, which is now becoming the emporium of this portion of the Hindu-Kush.

I here made the acquaintance of Bahadur Khan, Raja of Astor, the representative of the old ruling race, an old gentleman whose honesty, intimate knowledge of the country, and connection with all the local rajas were to be of the greatest value to me on more than one occasion. Deprived of his kingdom and very poor, living on a small grant of land & [Nanga Parbat mountain—Analyst] 643 ●

- 643 given to him by the Durbar, treated with contempt by the Kashmiri Governor of Gilgit, under whom is the valley of Astor, he had the loyalty and respect of his former subjects, who reserved for their Kashmiri rulers the hatred, fear, and contempt begotten of oppression.

526 We saw at Astor for the first time polo as it is played in what is either the home of its birth or the land of its earliest adoption. In very few places does flat open ground exist; consequently the polo grounds are merely terraces annexed from the cultivation, through which, as a rule, the main road into the village runs. The Astor ground is about a hundred and fifty yards long by twenty yards wide, and it is one of the best. Any number of men play, the usual limit is ten-a-side, and at the beginning of the game both sides assemble at one of the goals. When all is ready the captain of one side, usually the local raja or the most important guest, dashes down the ground at full speed, carrying the ball and followed by the whole mob of players, all shouting madly; the band, which is seated outside the boundary wall at the centre of the ground, plays its loudest, the lookers-on yell and whistle in a way a London street boy might be proud of, and, without checking his speed for a moment, the holder of the ball throws it into the air and hits it as it falls. The hit should be made from the centre of the ground, and a good man will often hit a goal. A man who is inclined to be a bit too sharp will gallop well beyond the centre before hitting, and gain an unfair advantage. One of my worst enemies, who murdered his brother because he was a friend of ours, who gave me endless trouble, and

487 The approach to Gilgit is rather fine. The road
311 runs up the flank of a huge alluvial fan several hundred feet in depth, where it bursts out of the hill-side, and which stretches a mile into the valley. From the east as you approached you saw then no trace of cultivation, only line after line of ruined terraced
346 fields bare and brown. High up on the main hill-
132 side, visible for miles, stands a Buddhist tower, the land-mark which must for centuries have welcomed the traveller to Gilgit. The extraordinary dryness of the climate, with its average rainfall of under a couple of inches a year, has kept it, ancient as it is, in a state of almost perfect preservation.

241 From the highest point where the road crosses
361 the fan there is a splendid view of the triple peaks of Rakapushi, the great mountain above Nagar to the north, and the Gilgit oasis bursts into view. This is a mass of cultivation five or six miles long by a mile wide at the widest, studded with villages and covered with fruit-trees, the whole irrigated and depending for its water on one stream which enters the valley at the western end.

● 643 I was met on the road at intervals by all the
576 important men in Gilgit; the lower the status of the official the further he came out, according to Eastern custom, to receive me. The rajas of Punyal, the country tributary to Kashmir, which is the continuation of the valley of the Gilgit river towards Chitral, refugee princes from Yasin, driven out by the Mehtar of Chitral, local wazirs and Kashmir officials met me one after the other, the culminating point being my reception by the Governor of Gilgit and the officers of the Committee directing the operations on the

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ARRIVAL AT GILGIT

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576 frontier. It was a motley crowd and picturesque, but I was glad when, after passing the fort, we were conducted to the house built in Major Biddulph's day, and left there in peace.

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643 The next few days were spent in making acquaintance with the Governor and the members of the Committee, which consisted of the General commanding at Gilgit, the General commanding the regular reinforcements, the Sunadés or officer commanding the irregular troops, and of a couple of high civil officials, the most important of all being Mehta Sher Singh, an old gentleman of high family and position in Kashmir. The ablest among these gentlemen was, perhaps, the Governor, who had held his post for eight years, was heartily sick of it, and was most anxious to settle matters with Hunza and Nagar somehow, and to be permitted to return to Kashmir. He was an adept at intrigue, the threads of all the frontier affairs were in his hand, and the puppets on both sides of the border generally danced at his bidding.

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648 My position was difficult; I had distinct orders not to give advice, but I could see very well that, if the negotiations going on failed, the Committee would come to me for it, and that whatever decision they came to, the onus would be thrown on me. Every endeavour was of course made to throw dust in my eyes, and to prevent my getting information as to what had really happened, why the tribes had broken out, what was going on at the moment, and as to the condition of the troops. I was told, however, and I knew the information was true, that between Astor and Nomal, the fort eighteen miles

000 acquaintance of Raja Akbar Khan, the Chief of Punyal, and his brothers and cousins. Fine fellows, magnificent mountaineers, who were later, under us, to prove "tall men of their hands."

The climate was perfect after Gilgit. We were camped in an apricot orchard, at an altitude of seven thousand feet and over, and the delicious air soon set us up.

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133 Gakuch fort and its cultivation stand high, seven hundred feet or so above the river bed. The formation is curious; the hills, in one fine slope from the snows, sweep out till they finish in an almost sheer cliff into the river, the last few hundred yards before the cliff is reached being comparatively flat. Through this level portion project great rounded masses of rock, water-worn and full of "pot-holes," the remains of glacial action. It looks as if, at some remote period, a huge glacier had flowed down the Ishkuman, and had swept to its left down the Gilgit valley. These rounded hillocks were full of chikor, the mountain partridge, which gave us good sport. In one of them is a cave reputed to be fathomless—really, I suppose, about twenty feet deep—heaped up with human bones. It was said to have been filled by a former ruler of Yasin, and a terror to his neighbours, whose bloodthirsty nature gained him the title of Adam khor, "the man-eater."

• 643
681 During my halt at Gakuch, Sirdar Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Mehtar's eldest son, who ruled Yasin, and who was to meet me just across the border, bombarded me with letters, and a curious incident occurred with one of his letter carriers. When I handed this man my answer to Nizam's letter, I gave him, as

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681 usual, a present, in this case a small round looking-glass in a brass cover, a thing much prized in these parts. He declined to receive it, and said the last man had got five rupees and a knife, and that he would not take less. It would have been impossible to carry on if I allowed myself to be rushed for presents in this way, so I dismissed him, and sending for the Mehtar's half-brother, who was accompanying me, explained the man's impertinence to him. The result was startling; the old gentleman was furious, said that, had we been in Chitral territory, he would have cut the man to pieces at once, and that the Mehtar would certainly, if he heard of it, kill the man and sell his wife and children for slaves. I interceded for him, and he got off without punishment, but it gave one an idea of how the Mehtar ruled, and why he was obeyed as he was.

159 Nizam-ul-Mulk met us the first march across the border, and was with us a couple of days. He was a handsomer man than his brother, but had the same heavy under-lip. His manners were charming, but his morals, like those of almost every leading man in the country, excepting the Mehtar, Afzul, and one or two others, left much to be desired. He was a worse governor than Afzul, a mixture of cruelty, indolence, and good-nature, but he was popular too in his way, being a fine shikari. He was always accompanied by his dancing and singing boys, without whom he would move nowhere, and he was consequently an intolerable nuisance on the march, as they kept up their music right through the night. During his first interview with me he

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Dard Av3
Chitral

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ARRIVAL AT CHITRAL

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gather the wild flowers as he passed them, and stick them into his turban. As a race they are slight and wiry; there were only half a dozen tall men in the country, and I never saw a fat one. This is no doubt partly due to the fact that there is no superabundance of food available, but the result is good. The children were really a joy to see; they had bright rosy cheeks and well-shaped faces; and the small girls, who were not kept within doors, were in many cases extremely pretty.

As we neared Chitral we were met by an increasing number of grandees, of regularly increasing rank. Eight miles from Chitral itself my old friend Raja Bahadur Khan, the Mehtar's half-brother, received me. I never understood how he had acquired a Hindu title, but in the Hindu-Kush they are not very particular. Half a mile further on, after passing through the narrowest part of a gorge along a path a foot wide, pegged on to the rock—one of the few places not even a Chitrali would ride over—a mass of armed men met us. One of them presented me from the Mehtar with a horse most gorgeously caparisoned with gold embossed head-stall, high demi-pique saddle—instrument of torture for an Englishman accustomed to the familiar Whippy—and prettily embroidered and spangled body cloth. Another half mile and the river leaves the gorge, and on the opposite side there is an isolated rocky mound, along the top of which were ranged some two hundred men, who fired a wild *feu de joie* as we passed. A mile or so further we emerged into the plain, and saw the Mehtar sitting surrounded by a brilliant crowd. Dismounting when about one hundred and fifty yards from him, I

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643 walked forward, the Mehtar walking to meet me half way. It was an interesting moment for both of us, as we shook hands and looked into each other's eyes. The Mehtar was a big man, and heavy, about sixty-five years of age, with a very strong and clever face, but the mouth was spoilt by the loss of his front teeth.

159 644 After a few words of welcome we mounted our horses, and rode off. The Mehtar was surrounded by his court, Afzul-ul-Mulk and various other sons were there, and representative nobles from all parts of the country. The scene was one of the most brilliant and striking it is possible to imagine. It could not compare with the more ordered magnificence of the court of an Indian prince, but what was lost in splendour and numbers was made up by its wild picturesqueness. The Mehtar, dressed in green silk (he was a most devout Mahomedan), riding a big horse covered with brilliant silver trappings, moved off, with me on his right hand, the centre of a crowd of hundreds of horsemen and footmen in the brightest array. Cloth of gold, the rich silks of Central Asia, the most superb velvet coats, the colour almost hidden by the gold embroidery, the brightest English and Chinese silks in all colours, scarlets and blues, crimsons and purple, plain and brocaded, chogas of plain whole-coloured velvets, or of English broadcloths, flaring cottons, and the dull, brown haircloth of the country were all mingled without the semblance of order in inextricable confusion. The only appearance of uniform was in the Mehtar's *corps de ballet*, all the men and boys of which were dressed alike in blue sleeveless coats over white muslin shirts covered with

CHAPTER III

A MONTH IN CHITRAL

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[642]

MEHTAR AMAN-UL-MULK was a very remarkable man. For forty years his had been the chief personality on the frontier; even in his father's time he had made his mark. It would be wearisome to attempt to unravel the long story of battle and murder, treachery and intrigue, formed by his life. Suffice it to say that he ruled a united Chitral, extending from the borders of Puncyal on one hand, to the borders of Kafiristan and Dir on the other, and that the watershed of the Hindu-Kush was his northern boundary. He was tributary to Kashmir, and received from that State a subsidy, which had been doubled a few years before our meeting, for his assistance when Gilgit was besieged by the then ruler of Yasin.

A brief account of this incident will give a good idea of the Mehtar's methods. Yasin was ruled by the Kushwakt family, descended from Shah Kushwakt, the brother of Shah Katúr, the founder of the Chitral royal family. The families of course frequently intermarried, and were closely connected. In the year 1880, Pahlwán Bahadur, the Kushwakt

1888]

A FRONTIER PRINCE

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ruler of Yasin, and a nephew of Aman-ul-Mulk, who had had an adventurous and stormy career, took it into his head to invade Punyal and to expel the Dogras from Gilgit. The Mehtar encouraged him in every way, promised him assistance, and urged him to the enterprise. Pahlwán started and laid siege to Cherkilla, the chief fort of Punyal. The moment he was well committed to his adventure the Mehtar, who had secretly collected his forces, occupied Yasin. The unfortunate Pahlwán was at once deserted by his people, and threw himself on his uncle's mercy. It was of the usual kind, and he died suddenly.

The Mehtar was steeped to the lips in treachery; his hands were crimson with the blood of his nearest relations; two out of his three brothers he had murdered; the third was in exile in Kabul; his Kushwakt cousins had equal cause to rue his name. He was continually plotting to get his refugee relations to return to his country, with small success, for they well knew theirs would be but a short shrift. But such a character cannot be judged by our standards: in wild Mahomedan states it is always, and must always be, a case of kill or be killed amongst the sons of a ruling chief after their father's death. Polygamy, and the pernicious habit of parceling out a kingdom into governorships during a ruler's lifetime among his sons, invariably lead to civil war; and when one brother falls into the hands of the other there can be but one result, and that as much in the interest of the state which is saved from war as in that of the conqueror, for "stone dead hath no fellow."

The Mehtar ruled his country with a rod of iron, 000

Dard AV3
Chitral

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A MONTH IN CHITRAL

[CH. III.]

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The Mehtar ruled his country with a rod of iron and none dared gainsay his commands. But his rule was not popular—far from it. His oppression extended in all directions: he sold large quantities of timber yearly to Peshawari merchants, and the whole of it was cut and conveyed to the streams by forced labour—of course unpaid for; he interfered in trade, and levied prohibitive taxes on merchandise passing through his country; he bought the goods of passing merchants, if he wanted them, at his own valuation; he sold his subjects into slavery, and sent presents of slave boys and girls to the Amir and to neighbouring chiefs. At the same time he had many good points. He was deeply religious according to his lights, yet he was no bigot. His view was that so long as a man was a good subject the ruler had no call to interfere with his religious opinions, and while I was in Chitral he soundly rated his son Murid for trying to enforce orthodoxy among his people. He was a kind and indulgent father, and devoted to his small sons, who used to form a pretty group round him when he came to see me, clustering about him with the fearlessness of affection. In a country where unnatural vices were rampant he was unstained. He had a religious horror of them, and attributed his success over the Kushwakt chiefs to their depravity, against which God's wrath had kindled. He was much married, not "cursedly confined" to one wife, or for the matter of that, to some dozens of wives and concubines. Like David, he "scattered his Maker's image through the land," and at every village you found a small son or heard of a daughter. He had eighty children.

Dad AVS
Chitral

159 wander apparently aimlessly from subject to subject, but you had to be very careful of what you said or admitted, for, like lightning, would shoot out some sudden searching question about the matter on which his mind was really working. It was his little way, practised I imagined originally as an art, but which had become second nature.

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159 The moment was an interesting one to be in Chitral: Mahomed Ishák had invaded Afghanistan from Russian Turkestan, Afghan Turkestan had fallen into his hands, the old princes of Wakhan, who had taken refuge in Chitral territory from the Amir, had been summoned by him, and momentarily reinstated in their country, his emissaries were passing through Chitral, and going to Dir, Bajaur, and Swat, endeavouring to raise trouble for the Amir. The Mehtar was very anxious; he was between the devil and the deep sea; he feared the Amir, and rightly, and hated him with a bitter and deadly hatred; he was afraid of the consequences if he espoused Mahomed Ishák's cause, for the success of which he prayed incessantly, and the latter failed in his attempt. On the other hand, Mahomed Ishák made great promises, and, if successful, might be a good friend; he could scarcely be a more dangerous and unpleasant enemy than Abdur Rahman. Altogether, it was a very difficult question, and he came and discussed it with me. I advised him, in what were the interests of Government as well as his own, not to stir up strife: a war once kindled on the frontier spreads frequently in unexpected directions. I pointed out that the Amir was our ally, that we did not desert our allies, and that Government would not be best pleased if the Mehtar

1880]

A TREATY ON COPPER

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started a conflagration. In the end, whether my counsel had anything to do with it or not, the old gentleman decided to sit on the fence and do nothing.

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The Mehtar's views on the condition of frontier affairs were interesting, and his knowledge of men and matters varied and wide. A man does not rule a frontier state forty years for nothing. He saw that, so far as his dynasty and country were concerned, safety lay in alliance with us, danger in any closer intercourse with Afghanistan. For this reason he was delighted to have an unconquered Kafiristan on his flank as a buffer between him and the "God-given Government." He might occasionally, in retaliation for too numerous murders on the part of the Kafirs, raid their country with the object of getting some slaves, but he had no desire to see it conquered, and he was delighted that the Kafirs made the road down towards Asmar, and up the Ashreth valley to the Lowari pass, their happy hunting-ground, and murdered stray Pathans. The more dangerous the road was, the more isolated and safe his state. We discussed many questions, to which I cannot refer, with daily increasing interest and amusement on my part. Some of his ideas with all his shrewdness were very quaint: one of his most persistent demands was that, given any agreement with Government, it should be engraved on a sheet of copper. Some ruffian had persuaded him that no treaty would be binding on us if only written on paper.

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My state visit to the Mehtar was most ceremonious. A deputation of his courtiers came and escorted us to the fort, at the gate of which the Mehtar met us, and conducted us to a dais outside,

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The chorus at the Mehtar's durbar was composed of all his men off duty, men from all the neighbouring villages who had come to see the fun, a stray Kafir or two who grinned in a friendly way at us, all the heterogeneous rabble possible to collect in Chitral. The price they paid for being present and looking at the dancing was continued applause, shouts of encouragement to the dancers, in which they were led by an official who was described as the head of the Mehtar's household. He was a very wild-looking creature, who rushed along the ranks of the spectators dressed in a scarlet cloth choga, and armed with a big ornamented stick, with which he belaboured any of the crowd who did not shout loud enough. After we had sat through the performance for some time the Mehtar rose, and, taking me by the hand, escorted me along a narrow path made by laying down cotton cloth, white and coloured, and stuffs of various kinds, finishing in a strip of sham kinkob, all of which became the perquisite of my servants after I had passed over it. The path led along the faces of the fort to the private garden, from which there was a door leading to the household offices and ladies' apartments. In the garden we found a tent pitched, into which we entered, followed by three or four of the Mehtar's most important sons and nobles.

Directly we had sat down the Mehtar began an oration which lasted an hour, with interruptions to drink iced water, and to rub snuff on his gums, the Chitrali way of taking this most seductive form of the weed. The upshot of his discourse was that

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643 he was a faithful servant of the British Govern-
648 ment, and that he wanted various things, mostly
159 rifles and money. Some of his remarks were
amusing, as when looking a Kashmiri officer full
in the face he said that he had been in the habit,
in the old days, of beating the Kashmiris and
looting them, but that out of consideration for us
he had abandoned this source of revenue. All this
time I was getting horribly hungry; we generally
breakfasted about eleven, and had been fetched
away from camp just before our breakfast was
ready, and it was long past two before the Mehtar
showed signs of having talked himself out. There
was nothing for me to say beyond the usual diplo-
matic *banalités* about the assurances I had received
from the Viceroy's and the Foreign Secretary's lips
of the interest felt by the Government in the welfare
of Chitral, and of their personal regard for the
renowned chief who ruled its destinies. The whole
thing was a sort of full-dress debate, the object
of which, on the Mehtar's part, was to let it be
known throughout Chitral, and in the adjacent
Pathan countries, Asmar, Dir, and Bajour, that
he was definitely putting himself on the side of
the British Government, and under its powerful
protection.

644 The Mehtar, having thoroughly talked himself out,
262 departed, leaving Afzul-ul-Mulk to do host. The
dinner was excellent of its kind, and we were intro-
duced to various famous royal dishes, about the best
being large flat unleavened cakes of bread full of
minced meat, and sweet omelets made with honey.

000 I remained some time in Chitral, seeing the

181 time, their rapidity in movement, and intimate knowledge of their country, and its capabilities for defence, would make them dangerous enemies to a small invading force, and valuable auxiliaries while on the winning side.

175 Events proved the justness of the opinion then
181 formed and recorded. A few years later saw Chitral in the throes of civil war, and a Mehtar in possession one day, ousted and flying the next, after the fall of a position attended with the loss of one man. The feeble resistance made to Colonel Kelly's advance by the Chitralis, though holding splendidly defensible positions, the secondary part played by the Chitralis in the memorable siege of Chitral, when all the real fighting was done by Umra Khan's Pathans, and the skill they showed in cutting off small parties of Sikhs, all went to prove that, though not wanting in courage and endurance, they lack the tenacity and grit which is wanted to enable men to face severe loss and to make real soldiers. As Napoleon says, "*Un homme ce n'est pas un soldat.*" The Chitrali is wanting in the something which makes a soldier.

643 I found that the Mehtar had no conception of our
648 real strength, no standard by which to judge our power. He undervalued our troops, his only idea of a standing army being taken from the old Kashmir regulars, a body with whose name disaster was associated, and some of which he had himself defeated, driven into the fort of Gilgit, and besieged there.
643 His sons and leading men who had been to India had
648 not seen enough of our troops for their reports on
743 them to impress him. One thing I found he was most anxious to have, and that was a properly

643 organised hospital and dispensary at Chitral, under a
648 good native doctor ; that this was to be at our expense
743 went without saying. I am glad to say I was able to
arrange this, a hospital was established next year,
and it has flourished and done much good in the
country.

431 Before leaving Chitral I sent the Mehtar the pre-
[576] sents I had brought up for him. The local etiquette
forbade the gifts being offered in public, as every-
thing so received had at once to be given away.
My presents, therefore, were taken to the Mehtar by
my head orderly. They consisted of a double-barrel
express rifle, a pair of shot guns, and a miscellaneous
assortment comprising silver goblets, cutlery, gold
cloth from Benares, silks and broadcloths ; and as
the ladies were to be propitiated, carefully-graduated
collections of rich brocades, silks, embroidered muslins,
looking-glasses, jewelled trinkets, and last, but not
least, boxes of scented soap and cases of perfumery.
I was careful to ascertain the proper proportion to be
observed in graduating the presents for the Mehtar's
leading wives, and had a solemn interview with his
minister on the subject. The result was excellent,
and to my surprise and satisfaction I found that the
Mehtar was delighted with the presents, and valued
them at considerably more than treble what they had
cost in India, and that the ladies were extremely
[159] pleased with theirs. The Mehtar's appreciation of
some of my gifts was amusing. He was much taken
with a nest of silver cups in a case, the innermost of
which was shaped like a champagne glass. He was
delighted with this, and pointed out that it would be
most useful as a spittoon when he chewed snuff. The

1889]

A TERRIBLE ROAD

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D
132 It was the middle of August before we left Gilgit,
361 and the heat was very great. The first march to
K Nomal presented nothing but the normal difficulties,
712 and was on the whole good. The fort, which had
been besieged the year before, was a fairly strong
one, but was commanded on three sides by modern
rifle fire, and was as usual insanitary and crowded.
D
[487] The next two marches to Chalt, the actual frontier
post, were very trying; the road ran between great
cliffs in a narrow gorge worn by the raging river, and
the heat was intense. The parris were the worst we
had seen, so bad indeed that we could not take our
horses with us. The Chaichar Parri, the last before we
reached Chalt, was a famous position, the outpost to
the Hunza-Nagar valley, and one which had never
been forced. No horse had ever been taken over the
cliff, which had been purposely left in its impassable
state, the path running across a hideous precipice on
the narrowest possible shelf only a few inches wide.
Biddulph describes this piece of road as worse than
any ground he had ever crossed when stalking in the
mountains, and it certainly was pretty bad. We
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[361] were met on the far side by a deputation from Nagar,
with horses for our use. The Chalt fort had only
been held on sufferance by the Kashmir troops; it
was a miserable square enclosure, with no proper
command over its water-supply, and was dominated
by another fort occupied by the Nagar people, and
situated within a couple of hundred yards.

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● 643 I was joined on my march by Raja Bahadur Khan
of Astor, who was closely connected by marriage with
both the Hunza and Nagar ruling families, and by
Raja Akbar Khan of Punyal. I was anxious to show

138 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GILGIT AGENCY [CH. IV.]

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● 643 that it was our policy to be on good terms with the natural leaders of the people of the country, and the Kashmir frontier officials had mismanaged their affairs so hopelessly, and were so distrusted, that I did not wish to have them as intermediaries. In the end Raja Bahadur Khan proved of the greatest service, and his tact and knowledge of the local conditions helped to avert what might have been a very serious disaster.

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131 The position of the small States of Hunza and
648 Nagar, which I was about to visit, is unique; as
642 Biddulph says, "they probably present the spectacle of a race living under almost the same conditions now as their forefathers did fourteen centuries ago."

Shut in by a girdle of practically impassable mountains, they had maintained their independence for centuries, though both States apparently had at different times acknowledged the suzerainty of the rulers of Gilgit, and latterly had bound themselves to respect that of Kashmir, and to pay it tribute.

B
648 The relations of Hunza to Kashmir, and through that State with the Government of India, were complicated by the fact that the Chief of Hunza also recognised the suzerainty of China, paid a nominal tribute to, and received presents in return from its ruler.

B
186 The two States, which are divided only by a river which runs in a bed six hundred feet wide between cliffs three hundred feet high, are inhabited generally by people of the same stock, speaking the same language, professing the same form of the Mahomedan religion, and are ruled by princes sprung from the same family. Notwithstanding all this, or more correctly perhaps because of it, they have been

Dard AV3
Chitral

1889]

ROUGH JUSTICE

193

ever count with certainty as to the succession. You 000
may sometimes strengthen a vigorous ruler with
advantage; to bolster up a weak one is, in the end,
almost always useless.

The visit to Dir hinged on that to Bajour, and 681
both now had to be abandoned. Preparations were 643
at once made for the return march to Gilgit. Several
posts reached me during my last few days in Chitral,
and some had been tampered with and parcels stolen.
I reported the matter to the Mehtar, who was furious,
and who caused instant enquiries to be made, and a
man sent for from each of the houses which had fur-
nished the runners. The culprits were tracked, and
the Mehtar proceeded to order condign punishment.
The men were to be sold into slavery, but escaped at
my intercession. The old Chief said it was no use he
knew to offer me the wives and children of the robbers,
but that he thought my Pathans would appreciate the
gift. I had much difficulty in persuading him to
leave the unfortunates in peace. But if no one
suffered very severe pains and penalties, the fuss
made had the desired result, and our posts were
sacred for the future.

My last days in Chitral were full of business, and 000
the evenings were spent as usual round a camp fire
watching the dancing, and listening to the boys sing-
ing. Three Kafirs joined the circle one night, one of
them having the most revolting type of face I ever
saw, and danced badly for some time. Nizam then
asked them for the chaunt which is sung when a
successful raiding party arrives near its own village.
They refused to sing it unless a goat was given
them to eat, so one was brought and presented

K offensive, and much in fear of the Chilas, who in
563 any raids in the Gilgit direction had to pass through
631 their territory. The fighting force of Gor was in-
significant, and the little state was tributary to
K Kashmir. The next republic was Darel; it was
[701] more important than Gor, and could turn out from
a thousand to fifteen hundred men. The Durbar
troops had in 1866 penetrated into the country, the
people of which had made submission, and every
year hostages were sent in to Kashmir, and a small
tribute paid. Tangir, which lay next, was about
equal in importance to Darel, and paid tribute to
the rulers of Yasin. Below these tribes stretched a
band of country inhabited by Kohistanis of different
clans until the Pathan border was reached.

I found on my arrival at Gilgit that the Gor
headmen had expressed their anxiety to come more
directly under the protection of Kashmir. They
were anxious to avoid being drawn into trouble
should the Chilas, as seemed likely, create dis-
turbances, and to throw in their lot openly with
Kashmir seemed to offer them the best chance
of security. In a few days their representative
deputation arrived, and after listening to their views
I dismissed them to their homes with suitable
presents, pointing out that they had nothing to fear
from our side.

D
643 Rather disturbing news now began to come from
159 Chitral. Umra Khan of Jandol had moved over his
648 border, and occupied a portion of Chitral territory,
and Afzul-ul-Mulk clamoured for the despatch of the
mission. The arrival of a mission and his recogni-
tion as Mehtar by the Government of India would

Dard Avs
Chitral

● 643 strengthen his hands, and would tend to prevent
159 aggression from the neighbouring powers. To my
648 disgust but not surprise, for I knew the little savage
well, he had signalised his acquisition of the throne
by wholesale murders of his elder brother's ad-
herents, and had killed three of his brothers in cold
blood. However it was no business of mine to
interfere, and I could only watch from a distance.
Robertson was very anxious to reciprocate the
advances made by the Gor people, and I suggested
to the Government of India that the wishes of
their representative should be acceded to, and that
he should visit the country. Sanction was accorded
to the proposal, and early in November Robertson
started for Gor.

643 The day he was to leave Bunji came a messenger
721 in frantic haste, bearing the news that Sher Afzul,
a brother of the old Mehtar, who had been in exile
for years in Afghanistan a pensioner of the Amir's,
had crossed the frontier by the Dorah, surprised and
killed Afzul-ul-Mulk in his fort of Chitral, and pro-
claimed himself Mehtar. This was bad, but the
most serious news was that he had proclaimed a
religious war against us, that our native agent and
doctor were in danger of their lives, and that troops
were being collected and hurried towards Yasin, the
tract of Chitral just beyond our borders. Later in
000 the day the late Mehtar's minister and the Governor
of Mastuj rode up to my door. I could hardly
recognise in the haggard travel-stained man, carry-
ing his favourite son on his saddle-bow, who swung
himself off his horse and stood broken with hard
riding before me, the picturesque, cheery gentleman,